GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANAGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:747
ANSWERED ON:20.07.2017
Shortage of Water
Lekhi Smt. Meenakashi

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANAGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been acute shortage of water in many parts of the country during the last three years, if so, the details thereof;
(b) whether the Union Government has received plans/proposals from any State/Union Territory regarding financial assistance for providing water or enhancing water supply in the areas hard hit by water scarcity; and
(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Union Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION
(DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN)

(a) to (c) The average annual water availability of any region or country is largely dependent upon hydro-meteorological and geological factors and is generally constant. As per the National Commission on Integrated Water Resources Development (NCIWRD) report, the total water availability of India received through precipitation is about 4000 Billion cubic meter (BCM) per annum. After evaporation, 1869 BCM water is available as natural runoff. Due to geological and other factors, the utilizable water availability is limited to 1123 BCM per annum, comprising of 690 BCM of surface water and 433 BCM of replenishable ground water. However, water available per person is dependent on population of the country and for India, water availability per capita is reducing progressively due to increase in population.

The average annual per capita water availability in the years 2001 and 2011 was assessed as 1820 cubic meters and 1545 cubic meters respectively which may reduce further to 1341 and 1140 in the years 2025 and 2050 respectively.

Annual per-capita water availability of less than 1700 cubic meters is considered as water stressed condition, whereas annual per-capita water availability below 1000 cubic meters is considered as a water scarcity condition. Due to high temporal and spatial variation of precipitation, the water availability of many region of the country is much below the national average and can be considered as water stressed / water scarce.

Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MoDWS) takes immediate steps to tackle the scarcity of drinking water as per the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). States are requested to prepare contingency plan as per the SOP and execute the same to mitigate the scarcity of water. As a long term solution, MoDWS has directed the States to cover the rural households with piped water supply. MoDWS has prepared strategic plan for providing drinking water supply in rural areas of the country for the period 2011-22. By 2022, the goal is to cover 90 percent of rural households with piped water supply.

Rural drinking water supply is a State subject. Under National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP), the States are empowered to plan, approve and implement rural drinking water supply schemes / projects. The schemes / projects to be taken up in a State are approved by State Level Scheme Sanctioning Committee (SLSSC) and they do not come to the Centre for approval. Hence, project-wise funds are not released to States under NRDWP and accordingly, there is no question of non-approval or delay in drinking water projects. MoDWS releases funds to States based on pre-approved criteria under NRDWP for providing safe drinking water in rural areas of the country.

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